



MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT

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Martin O'Malley
Governor

Robert M. Summers, Ph.D.
Secretary

Anthony G. Brown
Lieutenant Governor

February 18, 2014

The Honorable Thomas M. Middleton
Members of the Finance Committee
3 East
Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: Letter of Support: Senate Bill 530 – *Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard - Thermal Energy*

Dear Senator Middleton and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) has reviewed Senate Bill 530 and would like to express its support for this legislation. MDE was a member of the Thermal Energy Task Force that met over the course of the last year. The task force made recommendations on amending the renewable portfolio standard to include a requirement for electricity suppliers to secure renewable energy credits generated by thermal renewable energy sources. Such sources would constitute a category in the portfolio separate from sources that generate electricity.

Overall, the Department supports the recommendations of the task force. More specifically, from the Department's perspective, creating a separate standard for thermal renewable energy helps improve the likelihood that such sources will be built in Maryland. This is of interest to the Department because the use of animal manure biomass systems, a Tier I thermal renewable energy source, would provide farmers a means to better manage their excess nutrients, which would assist in meeting nutrient management goals for the Chesapeake Bay and within local watersheds. In addition, the use of woody biomass systems, also a Tier I thermal renewable energy source, could supplant the use of fuels that have a higher carbon footprint, which is supportive of the Department's efforts to reduce greenhouse gases.

Thank you for your consideration of this information as you review SB 530. Please contact me at 410-260-6301 or by email at jeffrey.fretwell@maryland.gov if you would like to discuss this issue further.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Fretwell

Cc: George (Tad) S. Aburn, Jr., Director, Air and Radiation Management Administration

